

SECRET

Executive Registry

65-6869

19 November 1965

DDI-504665

MEMORANDUM FOR: The Director of Central Intelligence

1. As was discussed at your staff meeting this morning, it seems logical to give both analytical and estimative attention to the increased road building activity going on in the southern part of the Laotian panhandle. You agreed that DD/I should pull together appropriate information, and prepare it for your review, in possible anticipation of your being called on by policy echelons to provide such intelligence data.

2. There is another aspect of this development that you may wish to consider. [We are now witnessing a great deal of top official attention being given to the sanctuary areas around Hanoi and particularly around the port of Haiphong. There seems to be a growing pressure to move militarily against these areas.] With regard to the road complex in the Laos panhandle, there has not yet been the same degree of either public or official examination and discussion. Once the relationship of this expanded road net is joined in the minds of our officials and in the mind of the public to the heavy military actions in the highlands, and to growing American casualty lists, I believe we should anticipate another wave of pressure calling for military action against these privileged sanctuaries and routes of access from the DRV to SVN. It may be timely to bring up-to-date those intelligence appraisals and estimates that would logically be called for if U.S./GVN military intrusion on the ground astride these access routes comes under consideration by our policy makers.

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Peer de Silvacc: DDCI
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